THE WARBLER
AN EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY

Dear Student, Artist, Thinker,

Of all the cities in the United States, **Hollywood** is perhaps the most fantastic. I use that word in the literal sense because the Hollywood industry deals primarily with *fantasy* — it tells stories about human courage and struggle, accomplishment and defeat, comedy and tragedy. Even the "true" stories, those "based on actual events," are crafted and require the actors and directors to make creative decisions so that we (the audience) can understand and enjoy a narrative pressed into 90 to 120 minutes (or if you're director Peter Jackson, over 4 hours for the third *Lord of the Rings* film!)

For many, the fantasy is so powerful that they become invested in the lives of the characters themselves. It's not uncommon for actors, people like Lena Headley (who played Cersei Lannister on *Game of Thrones*) or Michael K. Williams (who played Omar Little on *The Wire*), to receive letters filled with insults or praise depending on whether or not the letter-sender thought the character was a jerk or a hero.

That may seem a little ridiculous, but it speaks to the power that we place in these kinds of stories. How many times have you bonded with someone over your shared appreciation for a movie or TV show? How many times in everyday life have you referenced a quote or scene from one of those Hollywood creations? Tinseltown may have the reputation as a place of glitz, glamour, and other superficial qualities, but as a community, it taps into a very long history of storytelling. In ages past, these tales of regular folk going on adventures would take place on the radio, in theaters, or in bedrooms to lull children to sleep at night.

Humans are natural storytellers. We can't get enough of it. And suppose you were the director in charge of actors and writers — what story would you want to tell? You'll be joining a fine, age-old tradition if you start writing it down today.

Kyes Stevens and the APAEP Team

WORDS INSIDE

FROM "A BOOMING INTERNATIONAL MOVIE MARKET"...

bolster
support or strengthen; prop up

dearth
a scarcity or lack of something

sporadically
occasionally or at irregular intervals

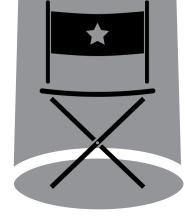FROM "HAVE DOG ACTORS"...

bucolic
relating to the pleasant aspects of the countryside and country life

despondent
in low spirits from loss of hope or courage

bespoke
made for a particular customer, instance, or purpose

"Integrate what you believe in every single area of your life. Take your heart to work and ask the most and best of everybody else, too."

MERYL STREEP // American actress

HISTORY

Hollywood's Humble Origins

FROM THE EDITORS | History.com | Adapted from "Hollywood" | August 21, 2018

Hollywood is a neighborhood located in Los Angeles, California, that's also synonymous with the glamour, money and power of the entertainment industry. As the show-business capital of the world, Hollywood is home to many famous television and movie studios and record companies. Yet despite its glitzy status, Hollywood has humble roots: It began as a small agricultural community and evolved into a diverse, thriving metropolis where stars are born and dreams come true—for a lucky few.

In 1853, a small adobe hut was all that existed where Hollywood stands today. But over the next two decades, the area became a thriving agricultural community called Cahuenga Valley.

When politician and real estate developer Harvey Henry Wilcox and his second wife Daeida moved to Los Angeles from Topeka, Kansas in 1883, he purchased 150 acres of land west of Hollywood and attempted to try his hand at ranching.

His efforts didn't go well, however, so in 1887, he filed plans with the Los Angeles County Recorder's office to subdivide the land. Soon, Prospect Avenue and upscale homes sprung up.

By the turn of the century, Hollywood had a post office, markets, a hotel, a livery and even a street car. In 1902, banker and real estate mogul H. J. Whitley, also known as the "Father of Hollywood," stepped in.

Whitley opened the Hollywood Hotel—now the site of the Dolby theater, which hosts the annual Oscars ceremony—and developed Ocean View Tract, an upscale residential neighborhood. He also helped finance the building of a bank and was integral to bringing electricity to the area.

Hollywood incorporated in 1903 and merged with Los Angeles in 1910. At that time, Prospect Avenue became the now-famous Hollywood Boulevard.

How Hollywood got its name is disputed. According to one story, after Harvey and Daeida Wilcox learned there was an Ohio town called Hollywood, she named their ranch the same and the name stuck. Another story states H. J. Whitley came up with the name while honeymooning in the area in 1886.

Whichever story is correct (if either), all three people played an important role in the famous city's development.

Hollywood Film Studios

The first film completed in Hollywood was 1908's *The Count of Monte Cristo*, although production of the film began in Chicago. The first film made entirely in Hollywood was a short film in 1910 titled In *Old California*.

By 1911, the first movie studio appeared on Sunset Boulevard. By 1915, many major motion-picture companies had relocated to Hollywood from the East Coast.

Hollywood was an ideal place to produce movies since filmmakers couldn't be sued there for infring-

ing on motion picture film patents held by Thomas Edison and his Motion Picture Patents Company. It also had warm, predictably sunny weather and diverse terrain perfect for movie backdrops.

Hollywood Sign

The Hollywood sign is a must-see tourist attraction, although it didn't start out that way. It was originally a clever electric billboard advertising an upscale suburban neighborhood in what is now the Hollywood Hills.

The sign originally said, "Hollywoodland," and was erected in 1923 by *Los Angeles Times* publisher and real estate developer Harry Chandler at a cost of $21,000. Each original letter was 30 feet wide and 43 feet tall and attached to telephone poles. Four thousand light bulbs illuminated the massive marquis.

The sign was supposed to last just one and a half years; however, it became part of Hollywood's culture and remained. During the Great Depression, the sign deteriorated. It was partially restored in 1949 and the last four letters removed. In the late 1970s, the sign was restored again and has been featured in countless movies, including *Superman, Mighty Joe Young* and *The Day After Tomorrow*. ●

⊕ Edited for clarity and space

The Hollywood-land sign in 1935

Image from Security Pacific National Bank Collection/Los Angeles Public Library

"I did not go into the film business to be symbolized as someone else's vision of me."

SIDNEY POITIER // Bahamian-American actor, film director, and ambassador

A Booming International Movie Market is Transforming Hollywood

BY WEIKO LIN | *The Conversation* | July 9, 2019

More than ever before, studios are realizing that diverse casts and stories are just as profitable — if not more so — than the traditional Western narratives that dominated Hollywood for decades.

When pitching a film to studios, writers and producers will commonly use what are called "comps." These examples of previously released films that are similar in style or content bolster the feasibility of a film project; if a version of a pitched script has been successfully pulled off in the past, the studio might worry less about sinking money into it.

A dearth of financially successful comps with diverse lead casts has made it tough to pitch films with nonwhite main characters. And that's one of the reasons why inclusive stories were only sporadically green-lit for major studio productions.

For years, if you were to pitch a story to a major studio with an all-Asian cast, you would have had almost no comps other than *Joy Luck Club*. That critically acclaimed film pulled in $32.9 million at the U.S. box office on a $10.5 million budget. While that's a respectable profit, it was no blockbuster, and it didn't trigger an onslaught of movies starring Asians.

Then *Crazy Rich Asians* happened. The 2018 romantic comedy wildly surpassed expectations by earning $238 million around the world with a $30 million budget, making it the top-grossing romantic comedy in 10 years.

The same thing is happening with films that feature African American leads. Just in the past few years, *Get Out, Us* and *Black Panther* were blockbusters that starred black lead actors. Now, any screenwriter who wants to pitch a horror and superhero movie starring black actors or a romantic comedy with Asian characters has a handful of highly profitable comps at their disposal.

Some claim the lack of representation on screen could be attributed to a simple fact: Movies need star power, and very few A-list movie stars were people of color.

Aside from actors like Denzel Washington or Jennifer Lopez, it was rare for an actor of color to be able to "carry" a film. That reasoning doesn't hold water anymore. Today, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, who identifies as black and Samoan, is the world's highest-paid movie star.

But one of the interesting aspects of films like *Crazy Rich Asians* is that they were huge successes at the box office without any marquee movie stars.

This has done two things: It showed studios that star power isn't as necessary as it was once thought to be. And it has allowed a new crop of diverse actors to emerge, with these films acting as a springboard to stardom.

But why is all of this happening now?

Ticket sales at U.S. cineplexes are at a six-year low, while marketing costs are soaring. As a result, studios are increasingly relying on international markets to reach profitability. Films like *Coco* — which is set in Mexico — and *Fate of the Furious* — which features Hispanic and African American lead actors — have global appeal.

The most tantalizing market is China.

Coco is the highest-grossing animated movie ever in China; it pulled in $189 million at the box office, which almost matched the $209 million it earned stateside. And *Fate of the Furious* actually made $392 million in China, easily overtaking the $226 million it earned in the U.S.

China is presently Hollywood's biggest foreign market. According to projections by PricewaterhouseCoopers, this year the Chinese box office will rake in $11.05 billion, compared to ticket sales in the U.S. of $12.11 billion. Next year, however, China is expected to surpass the U.S. for the first time and be crowned the world's largest film market.

Chinese audiences love superhero flicks. *Avengers: Endgame*, for example, earned more than $600 million in China alone. But films with modest budgets can also do well there. With a $10 million budget, the 2016 Bollywood hit *Dangal* made $193 million in China, almost tripling its $77 million take in India.

As for the future? Disney's upcoming live-action *Mulan*, which is based on a classic Chinese folk tale with an all-Chinese cast and a budget exceeding $100 million, has the potential to shatter box office records.

For too long, doors to mainstream Hollywood have been closed off to stories set in diverse cultures and precluded inclusive lead characters in popular movies. But now, thanks to a powerful global market, those doors are cracking open and studios are rolling out the red carpet. The result is happy shareholders and, for audiences, refreshing stories that more accurately reflect the world we live in. ●

WHY DID THE MOON GO TO HOLLYWOOD?

IF YOU GO TO THE MOVIES AND YOU'RE PAYING, **IS IT CHEAPER** TO TAKE ONE FRIEND TO THE MOVIES TWICE, OR TWO FRIENDS TO THE MOVIES AT THE SAME TIME?

punstoppable.com
riddles.com

Icon by Robert A. Di leso from Noun Project

⬅ Edited for clarity and space

MATHEMATICS

Sudoku

#65 PUZZLE NO. 4883646

					7	2	5	
	5		2					
3		2	8					
			8		3			
	3		5					
1	2		4			8		
	4			6				3
	7						4	6
	8		9	7				1
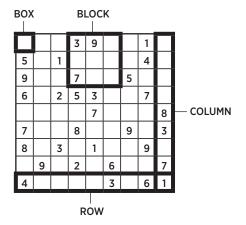
©Sudoku.cool

#66 PUZZLE NO. 5978174

								7
				3			4	9
3	5			8			6	
			1				7	
1		5				6	8	
7	8	3						5
	2	6	7	9				3
				2	1			
		4						

SUDOKU HOW-TO GUIDE

1. Each block, row, and column must contain the numbers 1–9.
2. Sudoku is a game of logic and reasoning, so you should not need to guess.
3. Don't repeat numbers within each block, row, or column.
4. Use the process of elimination to figure out the correct placement of numbers in each box.
5. The answers appear on the last page of this newsletter.

BOX   **BLOCK**   **COLUMN**   **ROW**

			3	9			1	
5		1					4	
9			7		5			
6		2	5	3			7	
				7				8
7			8			9		3
8		3		1			9	
	9		2		6			7
4					3		6	1

What the example will look like solved ⬇

2	4	8	3	9	5	7	1	6
5	7	1	6	2	8	3	4	9
9	3	6	7	4	1	5	8	2
6	8	2	5	3	9	1	7	4
3	5	9	1	7	4	6	2	8
7	1	4	8	6	2	9	5	3
8	6	3	4	1	7	2	9	5
1	9	5	2	8	6	4	3	7
4	2	7	9	5	3	8	6	1

"Acting is really about having the courage to fail in front of people."

ADAM DRIVER // American actor

Icons from the Noun Project

DID YOU KNOW?

The first feature film created solely with Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) was *Toy Story* (1995). Over **800,000 hours** of mathematical equations went into the film, which works out to more than a week of computer time for every second on the screen.

Originally, the term "movies" did not mean films, but the **people who made them**. It was generally used with disdain by early Hollywood locals who disliked the "invading" Easterners.

The first movie to gross over **$100 million** was *Jaws* (1975).

Albert Einstein's face inspired the artistic designer of the *Star Wars* character, Yoda.

Mickey Mouse's ears are always turned to the front, **no matter which direction** his head is pointing.

The **original title** for *Ghostbusters* (1984) was "Ghost Smashers."

The **most filmed author** is William Shakespeare, including straight film versions, modern adaptations, (*West Side Story* [1961], *The Lion King* [1994], etc.) and Shakespeare parodies.

The first picture to **sweep all five** major Academy Awards—winning for Best Picture, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Director, and Best Screenplay (adaptation) — was Frank Capra's *It Happened One Night* (1934) starring Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert. The second movie to do the same was *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975).

Source: factretriever.com

GEEZE, NOW IT'S GONE UP TO $1,320 AN OUNCE

GOLD?

...MOVIE THEATER POPCORN

Mother Goose & Grimm

A MOVIE TICKET COSTS $10. A MAN GOES TO THE MOVIES, AND PAYS THE CASHIER $100. IN RETURN, SHE GIVES HIM 10 MOVIE TICKETS. THE MAN AND THE CASHIER DIDN'T SPEAK OR SAY ANYTHING TO EACH OTHER AT ALL, DIDN'T GESTURE OR HINT ANYTHING. **HOW DID THE CASHIER KNOW** THE MAN WANTED 10 MOVIE TICKETS, AND NOT 1 MOVIE TICKET WITH A $90 CHANGE?

reddit.com

Idiom

"Cliff-hanger"

Meaning A story or situation in which the main consideration is one of suspense.

Origin "Cliff-hanger" entered the language as a description of the various short melodramatic serial films which Hollywood produced from 1914 onward. The best-known of these are *"The Perils of Pauline"* and *"The Exploits of Elaine"*, starring Pearl White and *"The Hazards of Helen"*, starring Helen Holmes and later Helen Gibson. The films in the series didn't run as one long sequence but each had an independent storyline, which usually began with the heroine being found in a situation apparently facing certain death, only to escape and thwart the bad guys by the end. *The Perils of Pauline* is the name now best-remembered, although the other two films mentioned above were more successful at the time.

It seems that the term 'cliff-hanger' wasn't coined until well after the heyday of what we now think of as 'cliff-hanger' films. The first mention of it that I have found in print is from the Illinois newspaper *The Edwardsville Intelligencer*, March 1936:

> *Maybe you remember Helen Holmes, of Keystone, Kalem, and other once-famous companies? "The Hazards of Helen" was her greatest cliff-hanger serial.*

Source: phrases.org.uk. *Edited for clarity and space*

Icon by Caroline Burchell from Noun Project

ART + CULTURE

The Con of It All

BY RAZA ALI HASAN

To the piano of ragtime music,
Paul Newman plunges his head
into a basin of ice and water.

A consummate conman, with Robert Redford,
he's up and ready to take on the Mafia.
The Sting is on.

Hollywood redresses the wrongs of the world.

From my proscenium seat, it is Newman's
awakening into action that catches
my imagination. Cool. So cool.

Outside NAFDEC cinema, Kipling's
Great Game rages on.

Yet, I am barely away. My basin
of ice cold water is going tepid.
The con of it all.

But to them it's jazz. It's all cool,
for jazz makes them look cool.

As for ragtime, just a last minute
anachronistic improvisation,
for good cinema's sake.

poetryfoundation.org

The Pakistani-American poet **Raza Ali Hasan** came to
America in 1991. He earned a BA and an MA from the
University of Texas, Austin, and an MFA from Syracuse
University. Hasan lives in Boulder and has taught at the
University of Colorado and Iowa State University.

WRITING PROMPT
Hollywood offers us fantasies of adventure, action, romance, and overcoming adversity; who hasn't finished a good movie and felt a little exhilarated afterward? But if you focus on the little details and think about how filmmakers work (or maybe watch a behind-the-scences special), the illusion starts to vanish. Write a poem about a time watching a movie or a TV show where you imagined what was going on behind the scenes. Did it ruin the fantasy? Or did some new magic come about?

Word Search

E	M	O	S	I	O	L	E	C	M	S	A	D	Y
D	E	I	O	E	C	R	I	O	O	H	O	A	N
I	T	A	N	Z	O	E	T	O	C	N	E	C	I
Z	R	M	A	U	U	A	G	L	G	G	N	A	O
Z	U	E	I	I	T	Y	N	O	I	T	C	A	D
A	G	N	P	I	P	E	E	T	S	N	N	D	P
J	T	I	R	P	L	U	N	G	E	S	D	R	T
N	A	C	O	A	G	O	E	N	S	N	I	O	A
N	E	O	T	A	G	I	C	M	E	I	O	F	E
R	E	A	D	Y	G	T	D	I	P	E	T	D	S
N	N	O	I	T	A	N	I	G	A	M	I	E	I
S	N	I	S	A	B	I	A	M	E	D	T	R	Z
D	B	A	C	O	I	S	I	N	E	E	U	P	P
G	C	O	N	E	M	G	A	D	D	A	I	E	M

CINEMA	COOL	JAZZ	IMAGINATION
TEPID	HEAD	REDFORD	ICE
READY	PIANO	ACTION	SEAT
RAGTIME	MINUTE	PLUNGES	BASIN

GM E
N I S S

DOG
THE

GET
GET
GET IT
GET
GET

WORD PLAY
A Rebus puzzle is a picture representation of a common word or phrase. How the letters/images appear within each box will give you clues to the answer! For example, if you saw the letters "LOOK ULEAP," you could guess that the phrase is "Look before you leap." *Answers are on the last page!*

`OPINION`

Is it Time for Oscars to Add a Stunt Category?

BY ZOE HEWITT | *Variety* | Feb 20, 2019

Every movie nominated this year for a best picture Oscar employed a stunt coordinator. Yet not one of these individuals will have the opportunity to receive Academy Award recognition.

The Oscars acknowledge categories ranging across multiple disciplines that support a film's story and visual dynamics. But the stunt department's contributions remain unsung. This might be due to misperceptions about what stunt performers actually do these days. Stunt coordinator Melissa R. Stubbs (*Tully*) has been a voting member of the Academy since 2007. When she began her career, stunt actors were viewed as adrenaline junkies with "Kodak courage" — her term for the desire to do the biggest, most dangerous stunt sequences just for the glory of having it captured on film.

In a world of pricey digital effects, stunt departments present themselves differently now. Their mission: to advance the narrative by means of repeatable, safe sequences that are also budget-friendly.

"We create a story with action," explains Stubbs. "The directors deal with actors on an emotional level, and we have stunt coordinators to turn them into action heroes."

Stunt coordinator Robert Alonzo (*Deadpool, American Made*) has drawn over the past 25 years on his film school and animation background when designing stunts. He describes a good stunt as one that "moves the story forward, utilizing camera angles and plot while making sure those things are in cohesion with the filmmaking team."

With stunt work having evolved over the years, the stunt coordinator title is in the midst of an update; stunt coordinators favor the term "action designer." The hope is that this will better reflect the position's responsibilities and creative process. Says Stubbs, "Back in the day, a stunt coordinator was more of a safety officer instead of somebody who is creatively involved in designing the action of the characters."

Stunt coordinator John Stoneham Jr. (*War for the Planet of the Apes*) points out that coordinators must work with nearly every department to ensure the safety of the performers. "If we're throwing a person through a wall," says Stoneham, "we'll need to make sure that there's a big enough area [to break through], so we work with construction. And we'll work with costumes since we might need to build pads into an outfit. We even work with the hair department to add mini helmets under wigs when necessary.

When a script only says "fight ensues," it's up to the action designer to choreograph what audiences see on-screen. "You pay attention to the main story points," says Alonzo. "And then you take into account how the elements of the environment allow you to create memorable sequences."

As is the case with many in their profession, the three stunt coordinators interviewed for this story are also second unit directors, at times overseeing the filming and editing of their own work.

With all that action designers do, it seems surprising that the Oscars are reticent to recognize their contributions. "The Academy likes to celebrate and acknowledge good filmmakers," says Stubbs, "and I think there's a disconnect between the perception of a stunt coordinator and a filmmaker."

Another challenge for the stunt department is that productions are typically loath to admit that their stars aren't performing all of the action themselves. It's not uncommon for actors to get pressured by studios and their own representation into taking credit in the media for the work of their stunt doubles; sometimes they even text those same people later to apologize.

Buffalo Boys actor Yoshi Sudarso is happy to perform some scripted actions but otherwise leaves the stunt work to the professionals. "A stunt double protects you and puts their life on the line for you," he says.

The best action designers have honed their skills over the years as stunt actors working under established coordinators. And while there are many types of stunts, they're not all relegated to big action movies. Best picture contender *Roma*, for example — more of a character study than an action film — deployed a stunt team of 15 under coordinator Gerardo Moreno. "Stunts cross the borders of various genres," Alonzo observes.

Given the Oscars' declining ratings, it's hard to imagine that a stunt category — with accompanying footage — wouldn't add some thrills to the show.

Adds Stubbs, "We're filmmakers, and I think the Academy needs to acknowledge that." ●

I TALK, BUT I DO NOT SPEAK MY MIND

I HEAR WORDS, BUT I DO NOT LISTEN TO THOUGHTS

WHEN I WAKE, ALL SEE ME

WHEN I SLEEP, ALL HEAR ME

MANY HEADS ARE ON MY SHOULDERS

MANY HANDS ARE AT MY FEET

THE STRONGEST STEEL CANNOT BREAK MY VISAGE

BUT THE SOFTEST WHISPER CAN DESTROY ME

THE QUIETEST WHIMPER CAN BE HEARD.

mentalfloss.com

ENTERTAINMENT

Have Dog Actors Had Their Last On-Screen Bark?

OSCAR SCHWARTZ | *The Guardian* | March 18, 2020

An old man and a dog sit on the moss-covered roof of a log cabin in the Canadian wilderness. It is a warm summer's night — a river gurgles nearby. The man, named Thornton, and the dog, named Buck, have been on a long journey to reach this bucolic splendor, a journey that is now coming to an end. Buck has met a pack of wolves in the forest and is overcome by a primal urge to rejoin his ancestors. Thornton is despondent at the prospect of losing his friend. So, in one final act of submission, Buck nestles into Thornton's lap, before he turns his back on domestication and returns to his own kind.

This is a scene in the recent cinematic remake of Jack London's 1903 novel *The Call of the Wild*, which tracks the journey of Buck, a highborn St Bernard collie cross. There have been several attempts at reimagining this tale in film: in 1935, a hulking St Bernard starred alongside Clark Gable in the first movie version of the novel. In 1972, Charlton Heston shared the screen with Buck the leonberger.

In the most recent iteration of *The Call of the Wild*, directed by Chris Sanders, Harrison Ford takes the role of Thornton — but no dog appears on the film credits. In fact, if you were on set during shooting for the scene at the log cabin, you would see Ford, looking forlorn and rugged, and there, nestling in his lap, a fully grown man named Terry wearing a mo-cap suit.

This is because the role of Buck has been outsourced to CGI. Of course, this animation technique has been used in Hollywood for a long time to animate, with striking realism, creatures that otherwise belong only in fiction. The dinosaurs of *Jurassic Park*. The super intelligent primates in the *Planet of the Apes*.

In this movie, however, computer graphics are used to replace a figure that has played an outsized, though often unacknowledged, role in film history — the dog actor. At what cost?

The history of dogs in cinema is as old as cinema itself. In the Lumière brothers' pioneering 1895 film *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory in Lyon*, a joyful mastiff bounds into frame 20 seconds through the 46-second-long reel, completely oblivious to having become part of movie history. This unexpected performance signals the uncontrolled, chaotic conditions under which directors first produced films, which is again demonstrated in the Lumière brothers' 1897 *Le Faux cul-de-jatte*, in which a stray dog wonders on to the set, lifts his leg and urinates at the film's pinnacle moment.

As the movie industry was consolidated in Hollywood studios in the first decades of 20th century, dogs continued to appear in film, no longer as unplanned distractions, but as actors with headlining roles. Throughout the 1920s, in fact, one of the most famous actors in America was a German shepherd named Rin Tin Tin. He starred in 23 films that were so profitable they saved Warner Bros from bankruptcy more than once.

Buck, the CGI lead of *The Call of the Wild*, with actor Harrison Ford playing Thornton

Image by 20th Century Fox

Part of what made Rin Tin Tin successful is that he was working during the silent film era and critics were taken by his physical prowess. In a review for the *Chicago Daily News*, the poet Carl Sandberg wrote: "He has the power of expression in his every move that makes him one the leading pantomimists of the screen."

As with other celebrities, the public was also fascinated with Rin Tin Tin's private life. During the first world war, he was rescued from a bombed-out trench by Lee Duncan, an American soldier who then dedicated his life to training the dog. In Los Angeles, Duncan would sometimes bring Rinty, as he was known, out on stage after the movie credits to demonstrate the range of his skills.

But if the dog's presence onscreen delights, it also introduces an element of unpredictability in production. Dog training is a complex, time-consuming art. Not only does the dog actor have to learn bespoke behaviors for scenes, they have to bond with their fellow human actors and feel comfortable on set. And even then, the best-trained dog on the most professional set will occasionally give into some primal desire. Rin Tin Tin, for instance, once attacked a

porcupine while shooting in the High Sierras, delaying production until the pock marks in his face healed.

Since the 1940s, there have also been strict guidelines setting out appropriate behavior for animals on set, which is now codified in the American Humane Association's 127-page long Guidelines for the Safe Use of Animals in Film Media. Animals rights groups like Peta closely monitor the industry to make sure producers comply, amplifying any hint of mistreatment to the public. When video surfaced of a distressed German shepherd struggling to keep its head above water on the set of *A Dog's Purpose* in 2017, outcry was so intense that executives at Universal canceled the film's premiere.

Perhaps to bypass these uncertainties, the director Chris Sanders opted for a computer-generated dog to play the leading role in *The Call of the Wild*, which premiered on 21 February this year. Sanders, who co-directed *Lilo and Stitch* and *How to Train Your Dragon*, designed Buck based off scanned images of a St Bernard collie cross that he and his wife adopted from a shelter in Kansas. The dog's on-screen movements were then performed by a renowned "creature actor" named Terry Notary, who has been the invisible agent behind a number of CGI animals, including a primate in *Planet of the Apes*.

On the set of *The Call of the Wild*, Notary donned a mo-cap suit and acted out Buck's role, mimicking

RANDOM-NEST

Storyboard Angles ILLUSTRATION BY ROB DOUCET

A storyboard is a graphic organizer that consists of images displayed in sequence for the purpose of planning and pre-visualising a motion picture or animation. The storyboarding process, in the form it is known today, was developed at Walt Disney Productions during the early 1930s, after several years of similar processes being in use at Walt Disney and other animation studios. (adapted from wikipedia.org)

TYPES OF SHOTS

EXTREME WIDE or ESTABLISHING SHOT | LONG / FAR WS | FULL FS | MEDIUM MS | CLOSE CU | EXTREME CLOSE ECU

ANGLES - BASIC

STRAIGHT ON | UP SHOT | DOWN SHOT | WORM'S EYE VIEW | BIRD'S EYE VIEW | OVER CAMERA

ANGLES - VARIOUS

OTS (over the shoulder) | UP SHOT / 2 SHOT short character in FG | UP SHOT / 2 SHOT same character size | DOWN SHOT / 2 SHOT large person in FG | VIEW THROUGH OL | VIEW THROUGH (BINOCULAR MASK)

OTS - 2 SHOT | OTS - 3 SHOT | LOW ANGLE / 2 SHOT | POV SHOT (POINT OF VIEW) | GROUP SHOT | FRAMING WITH OLs (OVERLAYS)

Upshots place the viewer beneath the focus and downshots place the viewer above, physically and psychologcally. These shots add variety and drama to the sequence. Shot 1 - medium long shot, cut to Shot 2 - downshot (POV), which sets up the upshot (POV).

TILT / DUTCH ANGLE
Used when weird, unstable, impressionistic, spooky, or other novel views are needed.

DUTCH ROLL
Twist in to a tilt to over-dramatize a reaction.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

A quote I keep going back to — especially in difficult moments — is the following by poet and teacher Audre Lorde: "Nothing I accept about myself can be used against me to diminish me." This quote grounds and inspires me to believe in myself — to treat myself with love and care always. Every person has sources of doubt and insecurity, but, as Lorde points out, there is great power in accepting one's full self, flaws and all. Moreover, this acceptance can be protection against forces that would otherwise weaken you. We can always strive to be better, of course, but it's important to realize that this is an endless process, so why not accept it and love it as such?

Owen

(continued from page 9)

dog-like movements. The graphics team then replaced his form with a computer-generated version of the dog during the editing stage. The output is a beautifully rendered though somewhat disorienting figure on screen.

In scenes where Buck is shot from a distance — chasing rabbits through fields or hauling a sled through over the Alaskan tundra — he looks like a convincing, if intensely oversized, dog. But then, in more intimate moments when Buck is interacting with Thornton, his expressions and behaviors are bizarrely anthropomorphized. For example, the dog somehow understands that Thornton has a drinking problem and gazes at him disapprovingly as he sips his evening whiskey.

One of the joys of London's original novel is that it offers a dog's-eye view of the world, a story where the action was motivated by animal desire. No doubt, Buck's overdramatically humanlike expressions were an attempt to translate this into film. But for me it had the opposite effect. CGI Buck sits in an uncanny valley between dog-like human and human-like dog.

Watching the film, I was reminded of Martin Scorsese's recent critique of the CGI-laden Marvel franchise. They are theme parks, he said, not movies. They provide "audio visual entertainment" with no friction, no mystery, no emotional resonance. This, he went on, signifies a larger trend in the movie industry, where films are optimized to distract, entertain and generate maximum revenue, leaving little room for movies that "confront the unexpected on the screen", which, for Scorsese, is the function of cinema.

Since it first bounded on to the screen in the 19th century, the dog actor has been a medium for precisely this unexpected aesthetic experience. They perform unselfconsciously, with a heightened sense of immediacy. CGI Buck, a strange cyborg composite whose animal instincts are contrived by humans, fails to preserve this legacy. Indeed, he appears to represent precisely what Scorsese laments: the technological domestication of cinema. ●

⬆ Edited for space

Answers

SUDOKU #65

4	1	8	3	6	7	2	5	9
7	9	5	4	2	1	6	3	8
3	6	2	8	9	5	4	1	7
5	4	7	1	8	9	3	6	2
8	3	6	7	5	2	1	9	4
1	2	9	6	4	3	7	8	5
9	5	4	2	1	6	8	7	3
2	7	1	5	3	8	9	4	6
6	8	3	9	7	4	5	2	1

SUDOKU #66

4	6	8	2	1	9	5	3	7
2	7	1	5	6	3	8	4	9
3	5	9	4	7	8	2	6	1
6	9	2	1	8	5	3	7	4
1	4	5	9	3	7	6	8	2
7	8	3	6	4	2	9	1	5
8	2	6	7	9	4	1	5	3
5	3	7	8	2	1	4	9	6
9	1	4	3	5	6	7	2	8

? Brainteasers

Page 3 To become a star; It's cheaper to take two friends at the same time. In this case, you would only be buying three tickets, whereas if you take the same friend twice you are buying four tickets.
Page 5 He paid with 10 ten-dollar bills.
Page 6 Rebus Puzzle:
1. Messing around
2. The underdog
3. Forget it
Page 7 An actor

UNTIL NEXT TIME 👋!